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the beautiful boy standing before her, the small dark
child, still as a statue, by the side of his young master.
But royal dukes must never be surprised, & must
always be ready to receive visitors, & that without
asking questions. So it came to pass, that
Salad had a Hall & Prince Pearlina, a chamber
in the palace. Although everyone wanted to know
where he came from & what he belonged to, & how
long he was going to stay, & where he was going to
next, nobody could ask a single question
for good manners' sake. After Prince
Helena, she took her delightful play-fellow without
even wanting to ask a question, & was the
happiest princess in Christendom.

In very early sunshine with princess Helena
next morning, the morning after, to her
Mama Gammel had overslept herself, & when
~~she did it~~ had she to lie abed before her
nurse came to dress her. And then it was:
"Oh nurse, did you ever see such a beautiful
prince? His name is Prince Pearlina, he
lives in so; didn't you see that great peep
fastening his button? That's my little Prince
Pearlina. Oh, I hope he is coming to live
with us for ever ever!" Her princess Helena
clasped her little hands tight & clotted as
if she was crying ever so, but all the same,
her tongue ran on without a moment's pause
giving nurse Gammel nothing to answer, & that
was perhaps as well as that good woman, & all

Annie's household

at the ~~the~~ servants of the Duke her at - Maria
is - ends to know that Prince Reardon could be
Russian Helena did not trouble herself in the
least - about that matter, though she did run
on with -

"And, so Maria doesn't know he has no father?
He did not even know what a father was: & as I
promised that I would give him mine.
But, nurse, can you give your father away,
can you have him all the time for yourself
just to come as if you hadn't given him
away at all?"

"What - a queer child you are, my lady!"

"Oh nurse, that's just like you. Whenever
I want to know, you call me a queer child!
I told my father one day, but then he doesn't
tell me things. I think grown-up big people
don't know little people's things."

"Well, now you have Prince Reardon, lady, &
perhaps he knows these queer things."

"Oh yes, I ~~have~~ been thinking for hours & hours,
hours, I thought you were never coming.
Nurse: but then I wanted all the time to
think what I should ask him first. But
as so many things, I don't know where to begin.
Do you think he is awake nurse?"

"Awake.. yes; he's been up & out - these three
hours, galloping off on that bony little
black horse of his."

In answer to this, Maria Gamal sent me away
the long plaid of ^{yellow} hair with cypress bangles: but her
white shoulders began to ~~be~~ ^{show}, & she ~~had~~ ^{threw}
herself ~~on~~ ^{across} her nurse's knees, with a sudden shiver.

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others, between the sobbing nurse & Gamal said,
"No — will — never — come — back —
no — more!!"

It was now to the ship, or waiting to see, or
if now the duke would find him & bring him
back: the tears fell faster, & the sob came thicker,
until at last — that came quick patters of
a light horse carrying a light-ride that she had
heard for the first time yesterday amongst
so filly plumes!

And now there was a hurrying & hurrying
& beating of eyes, there was not a minute to
lose for who could kill, but he might be gone
again, he & Salate, before ever she got to him!
Poor Nurse Gamal! she had rather a hard
time of it with her little mistress that morning!

All Day.

There he was, sure enough, sitting with her
father above the salt. The little girl came sailing
up the great hall rather shyly followed by her
nurse, & she curtained to her father, shielding
her mouth to be kissed; then she
curtained to the boy visitor, she was not
shy at all, but was very glad to meet &
kiss his little friend yesterday. A
congratulation from up the hall, but not
much was said by the great people above the
salt. The duke was quickly watching the two
children, soon might see his eyes wrinkle
now & then as he looked across to listen
to the wows & pe about the old captain's eyes
puckered

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punchered up he saw he was smiling, for you could
not see his face or mouth for beard & mustaches.
What amused the gentlemen was to see Helena's
eyes fixed on her young companion, so that she
nearly forgot to eat her breakfast, would have
forgotten it altogether if it had not been for Mrs
Garnet who stood behind her lady's chair. As for
him, he did not look at Helena at all after the
first glad greeting. His eyes were roving up & down
the long line of ~~gallant~~ knights &
squires & serving men whom at each in his
degree down the long table. No sooner had
Latter Gilden said grace than, there he was by
Estan's side, fingering the hilt of his sword
asking a hundred questions in a breath,
as to what battles the old man had fought, &
what brave deeds that sword had done.

Now this was rather tedious; Helena, who
was everywhere a princess, never thought
of grinning after the boy; but that her venomous
playfellow should not play with her, was
not to be thought of. She stood still then
on the dais with her nurse behind her while
all the people were filing out of the hall, but
Estan saw the blue eyes grimacing & leaped
across to her, the boy by his side.

"Well, my princess," said the old man
fondly - there was nobody in the world for him
to compare with Helena - & what was
going to do to amuse our victor today?"
Ah, that was as it should be. He could ~~scold~~
Rings

things, I have Reerlin to play with her all day long! And Esten got a kiss each - the reward he liked best.

"Oh, I want to show him everything & tell him everything! It will take us every day to do it all!"

Away the two went, hand in hand. First there was a visit to the stable, where Esop, her father's fine black mare, was admired. Then Guinevere, her own snow-white pony, which reminded Helena to tell her guest - ~~the~~ all about her own christening & the queen's visit - a story she had heard a hundred times from nurse Gamal - show the Queen had sent her this lovely pony, with not a single coloured hair in coat or mane or tail, on her fifth birthday.

And Guinevere came skimming up to her mistress, & kissed her for apples, & made such a fuss that she did not hear Reerlin say, help to him.

"I have seen the Queen, someday I shall be her knight. Perhaps I shall die for her! Then it was Salade's turn to be admired. She gazed at his master's new price & with such soft

wise dark eyes, that the little girl drew her arms round his neck & kissed his shiny black nose. Then Reerlin must needs give Salade a hug too, & the children rubbed noses over the head of the ^{little} Arab.

Then they saw the kennels to be seen. Helena, pet-honny, Bran - who kept eye & foot & whine for joy & grief trace his mistress but not be able to break his chain apart at her. There is a story to tell about him too. Now, the first

visit him at Resigners.

Now Helena had never ventured into the keep by herself. Even now she would have gone to seek her father or her father, but how could she show as a coward in Roderic Roderic's eyes? Besides, she was pretty sure that ⁱⁿ ~~one~~ of the keepers would be there on guard - would follow them about from den to den. So into the keep they went, & down the steep stone staircases into the darkness, Roderic not knowing where they were going, & wondering at the awful howls & cries which the terrific roar that made both children shudder in their shoes. Helena said not a word, & was very white, but all the time she thought, down at the bottom we shall find the keepers.

They do not start on the bottom steps for a moment to get used to the darkness. For there was no light except what came down through the ~~for~~ door they had left open at the head of the staircase; unless you could call the green glare of many savage eyes shining like twin lamps out of the darkness every den, a light. But there was nothing at all outside the dens, not one of the keepers was there, for indeed they only came amongst the beasts at feeding times.

Helena would have fled up the steps in her terror, for she was a brave girl though she was, but she gave one glance at her companion's face which was so full of interest & delight that she was ashamed to show her fears.

The beasts seemed to have suspended their concert - phylons sounds in order that they might

might - the better place it - the two children on the
steps, there was a sudden silence in the cage
more dreadful than the din that went before
it.
And now a strange thing happened. The
boy leaped boldly into the vault - when every
den was haunted by savage nocturnal
beasts, he went straight up to the den of the
lioness. The terror of the keepers, & put his
hand into her cage. Helena screamed for
help, making sure that hand & arm would
be torn off; ~~then~~ ^{then} placed her eyes to the spot
but what was her surprise both to see the
tawny beast lie down ~~apart~~ ^{apart} at the feet of
Pearl, as a faithful dog might do, under
the carcasses of his hand. All the time there
was a low murmur of talk, as if Pearl
had found a friend while from the heart
came a sound as if of fondness, as if the
purring of a pet cat under the hand of her
mistress. The same sort of thing went on
before the bars of every cage. Pearl clanged
long before each, ~~as if to talk~~ like one who
called to see a friend, yet was curious to
see how the most-savage beasts, even the
beasts of the jungle, met him with signs of
gentleness.

It was long before he had finished the round
of the cages & reached again the spot where Helena
was still standing in much amazement. He
had forgotten the little prince altogether.
"Oh, wait - you come & speak to the old lioness
find out the rest? He is a dear old thing!"
But Helena knew that old lioness very well.

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Call around any way during of his which could
take this hideous shape.

"I could stand it better," said he. "if the hag would
only speak!"

But she never said a word, no more than if she
had been a deaf mute. For mine, and twenty days
she took the warmth out of the sunshine & the pleasure
out of Kool's heart.

At last, on the twentieth day, after dark, we
leading in ^{rich} stranger guests through the halls
chambers of his palace before they returned to
their own countries, a glorious sound of
rattling tones made everyone that heard it
shudder.

They were in the fair chamber built for the
Aster children, ~~from many corners~~ & the sound
came from behind the black hangings, blind
as the sky, & bordered all over with flowers & birds.

All alone, the curtains came apart with a
loud Chshshsh, & there the hag stood, ~~with~~
showing at least, shaking her long bony pro-
piger so close to his face that her claws & nail
scratched his cheek.

"Ha! ha! he! give him joy! give him joy!"
A haire shall he get.

But it won't be a long,
And his ~~own~~ shall ~~be~~ hair!
shall pair, ha! ha! shall pair.

And his bride he shall find.

For the hair that shall live.
Ha! ha! give him joy! have a care!

Give him joy, ha! ha! give him joy!"

At last she had spoken! And that was what she
wished into Kool's ear with in a voice like the
rattling